

AMENDMENTS

Please enter the following amendments:

Amendments to the claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1.-3. (**canceled**)

4. **(currently amended)** A hybrid oligonucleotide consisting of one or more deoxyribonucleotide POPS blocks, the POPS blocks comprising alternating phosphorothioate and phosphodiester internucleoside linkages, and one or more regions of 2'-O-substituted ribonucleotides, wherein the ribonucleotides are linked by internucleoside linkages selected from the group consisting of phosphodiester, ~~phosphotriester~~, and phosphorothioate, and ~~phosphoramidate~~ internucleoside linkages.

5. **(previously presented)** The oligonucleotide according to claim 4, having from 12 to 50 nucleotides.

6. **(previously presented)** The oligonucleotide according to claim 4, having from 17 to 35 nucleotides.

7. **(previously presented)** The hybrid oligonucleotide of claim 4, wherein the alternating phosphorothioate and phosphodiester internucleoside linkages are present in a ratio of from 1:3 to 3:1.

8. **(previously presented)** The hybrid oligonucleotide of claim 7, wherein the alternating phosphorothioate and phosphodiester internucleoside linkages are present in a ratio of about 1:1.

9. **(previously presented)** The hybrid oligonucleotide of claim 7, wherein the phosphorothioate and phosphodiester internucleoside linkages alternate in a manner selected from the group consisting of one-to-one, two-to-one, one-to-two, two-to-two and three-to-three.

10. (previously presented) The hybrid oligonucleotide of claim 4, wherein the one or more regions of 2'-O-substituted ribonucleotides are linked by phosphodiester internucleoside linkages.

11. (previously presented) The hybrid oligonucleotide of claim 4, wherein the one or more regions of 2'-O-substituted ribonucleotides are linked by phosphorothioate internucleoside linkages.